

REMARKS

Claims 1-14, all the claims pending in the application, stand rejected. Applicant has cancelled claims 1-14 and has replaced them with claims 15-21 in order to clearly and unambiguously define the invention in a manner that clearly distinguishes the invention from the prior art.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 5, 7-8 and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner cites several words and phrases that he considers to be unclear or to lack antecedent basis. This rejection is rendered moot by the cancellation of the rejected claims, and is inapplicable with respect to the new claims, as Applicant has endeavored to draft the new claims with clarity and with proper antecedent basis for all terms.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-14 are rejected as being anticipated by Nishii et al (6,468,428). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

The Invention

New claims 15 to 20 are directed to the invention embodied in the exemplary illustrations in Figs. 2A-2C and 3A-3C of the present application. Therefore, according to this embodiment, a reservoir or reservoirs (23, 24) are added together with a light introducing window (3). Such reservoirs (23, 24) are provided on one end side or sides of the casing adjacent to the light sources (4), together with the light introducing window (3), as shown in Figs. 2A and 3A and as mentioned on page 7, line 2 from the bottom to page 8, line 2 of the instant specification. Each reservoir (23, 24) serves to make pressure distribution of an object fluid on each end face of the photocatalyst fiber bundle 1 and, thereby, serves to establish a uniform flow rate of the object fluid, as explicitly described on page 8, line 5 from the bottom to page 9, line 3.

In addition, the light-leakage photocatalyst filter claimed in new claim 19 essentially includes the partition wall 25 (mentioned on page 10, lines 9 to 11 of the instant specification) in addition to the single reservoir 23, the inflow and the outflow ports 21 and 22 separated by the

partition wall 25, and the light introducing window 3 illustrated in Fig. 3A. This structure is effective to lengthen a filter length of the object flow, as mentioned on page 10, lines 15 to 17.

Nishii et al

Nishii et al (6468438B1) teach a photocatalyst filter which has a photocatalyst carried on a surface on a light guiding body. However, there is no disclosure at all with regard to the use of a reservoir and a relationship between the reservoir and a light introducing window. Moreover, Nishii et al has no teaching with respect to a partition wall dividing a photocatalyst fiber bundle.

Accordingly, Nishii et al has nothing to do with the present invention claimed in new claims 15 to 20.

Claims 1-3, 7-8 and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Peill et al (5,875,384). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

Peill et al

First, the rejection is moot in view of the cancellation of the rejected claims. Second, Peill et al is distinguishable because it teaches a photochemical reactor system employing optical fibers. The optical fibers pass through holes 40, 42 in top spacer 32 and bottom spacer/lid 30 into reaction vessel 20 (column 5, lines 43 to 45).

However, Peill et al fails to disclose a reservoir or a relationship between the reservoir and the light introducing window, as now claimed. Furthermore, there is no teaching or suggestion in Peill with respect to any granular spacers interposed among the optical fibers.

Taking the above into account, Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 15 to 20 are not anticipated by either Nishii et al or Peill et al. Further, Nishii et al is not available as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 103(c) for purposes of obviousness, and Peill et al contains no teaching or suggestion that would render the presently claimed invention obvious.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Application No. 09/606,678

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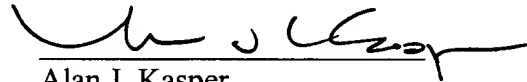
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